

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 189 I feel the Love of God within me now.

Sarah's Commentary:

This is another beautiful Lesson that is so similar to the Lesson yesterday. It is all about the light in the right mind that we cannot access when the darkness of the ego thought system prevails. Yet we do have access to this light when we choose the thought system being taught by Jesus through this Course. He tells us precisely what we are to do, which is to let go of all that stands in the way. Forgiveness is about releasing the thought system that reflects our decision to listen and follow the voice of the false self. It is a choice we made to separate from the love given us in our creation. Since the love is in us now, why do we not experience consistent peace and joy? It is only because we block it from awareness with our investment in the body and the world. We have identified with the separate, individual, and special self we think we are. We think we are on our own and have to figure out life and successfully solve the problems that show up in form so we can be happy. But, it is all a smokescreen set up by the ego to keep our focus outside of ourselves, rather than looking within. It is like trying to participate with the actors in a movie by thinking we can solve the problems of the characters on the screen. There is nothing we can do in form that will ever bring us the love we seek because we already have it within.

In the experience of the holy instant, we connect with peace, love, innocence, joy, gentleness, and hope in a moment of blissful silence, where all our thoughts, hopes, expectations, and concerns are stilled for just a moment. This light is in us *now*, and it is intended to be known. **"It was not placed in you to be kept hidden from your sight."** (W.189.1.5) Jesus reminds us, **"There is a light that this world cannot give. Yet you can give it, as it was given you. And as you give it, it shines forth to call you from the world and follow it. For this light will attract you as nothing in this world can do. And you will lay aside the world and find another."** (T.13.VI.11.1-5) (ACIM OE T.12.VI.55)

What is it that keeps us from experiencing this light that is in us all the time? Jesus says that we are **"blinded by the world,"** (W.189.1.2) but **"To feel the Love of God within you is to see the world anew, shining in innocence, alive with hope."** (W.189.1.7) This is the real world, but it is not external. This world reflects the love in our minds. In this experience, whatever happens is no longer of concern to us because there is an awareness that we are not the mythical figures in this dream but, in fact, we are the dreamer of the dream. How can what happens in the dream affect you when you know you are the one dreaming it? From outside of the dream, nothing here is real nor has any real consequence. When we see ourselves as figures in the dream, we feel vulnerable, and as a result, we set up defenses to protect ourselves. Our awakening from the dream is preceded by a change of perception from wrong-minded to right-minded perception and with it comes the experience of the real world.

"Who could feel fear in such a world as this? It welcomes you, rejoices that you came, and sings your praises as it keeps you safe from every form of danger and of pain. It offers you a warm and gentle home in which to stay a while." (W.189.2.1-3)

The real world is a state of healed perception that precedes Heaven. **"This is the world the Love of God reveals."** (W.189.3.1) It is not the world we experience when we identify with the ego and see ourselves as a figure in the dream being acted on. The world becomes meaningless when seen from the perspective of the dreamer of this dream. From the perspective of the ego mind, we see hatred and attack of every kind in the world. Yet it is only the hatred and attack in the mind that is so intolerable to us that we project it out, and now we see it in the world.

The world we see is an outward picture of our inner condition. **"Projection makes perception."** (T.21.IN.1.1) (ACIM OE T.21.I.1) The world we see is a projection of our own thoughts. It is a giant projector screen where we see what is in our own minds. **"You will look upon that which you feel within."** (W.189.5.3) Everyone on the projected screen offers us another opportunity to look within and see what wounds we are holding onto where we are attacking ourselves. It takes great honesty and courage to look at these wounds, without judgment and self defense. Any suffering we experience is resistance to taking responsibility for our projections. When we say "yes" to whatever we are experiencing and see everything as helpful for our healing, there is no need for suffering as we see it all for our good. Allow yourself to experience fully what is coming up because, without resistance, the feelings and emotions that have been kept suppressed can be brought to the light, and they dissipate with the help of the Holy Spirit.

I am not saying there are not events in the world that reflect behaviors that are hateful and attacking. Yet our interpretation of these facts is what upsets us. For example: someone may take your money. That is a fact. They have the money you had and now you don't have it, but only your interpretation that you have been hurt and you want revenge causes you pain. As Jesus tells us, **"Perhaps it will be helpful to remember that no one can be angry at a fact."** (Manual for Teachers.17.4.1) When we interpret the act of taking money by someone who is a thief, we are accusing ourselves of thievery, but what have we stolen? We believe the ego's story that we have stolen our identity from God, but we don't want to see this in ourselves. We prefer to see the thief as outside of ourselves.

However, we are being shown there is nothing outside of us. Everything starts in our own minds. When we are not willing to look within but instead see the problem outside ourselves, we are helpless to do anything about it. We are reacting to our interpretations as if they were correct. **"This is shown by the fact that you react to your interpretations as if they were correct."** (T.12.I.2.3) (ACIM OE T.11.I.2) Now we defend those interpretations, and we suffer as a result. **"Under the circumstances, would it not be more desirable to have been wrong, even apart from the fact that you were wrong?"** (T.13.IV.3.1) (ACIM OE T.12.IV.25) When we recognize that **"Perception is a mirror, not a fact,"** (W.304.1.3) we become more willing to investigate what is being mirrored that is unhealed in the mind. The temptation is always to blame instead of accepting responsibility. Only by looking within can our own misperceptions be forgiven.

I had a discussion with someone last night about the ills of the world and all of the crises going on with everything seemingly getting worse. Many people are being challenged by inflation, climate, war, disease, poverty. The world we see seems full of problems, and no matter how hard we try to bring peace, the problems continue generation after generation. Yet that is precisely why the world was made. It was made to distract us by placing our focus on the screen where all these issues seem to be taking place. This is why the Lesson says that we are **"blinded by the world."**

(W.189.1.2) **"Yet you have eyes to see it."** (W.189.1.3) The truth will not be seen through our body's eyes, but when we identify with right minded perception, we see with vision. Vision has nothing to do with the body's eyes that were made not to see. Their seeing stops at the forms of the world. Behind these images, lies the real world.

We cannot see both worlds. It is either a world of malice or the real world two pictures that are mutually exclusive. **"Yet is the world of hatred equally unseen and inconceivable to those who feel God's Love in them."** (W.189.4.1) Yes, we still see misbehaviors in the world, but we do not need to see them as anything real, and they do not have to disturb our peace. **"What would you see? The choice is given you. But learn and do not let your mind forget this law of seeing: You will look upon that which you feel within. If hatred finds a place within your heart, you will perceive a fearful world, held cruelly in death's sharp-pointed, bony fingers. If you feel the Love of God within you, you will look out on a world of mercy and of love."** (W.189.5.1-5)

The real world is only experienced when everyone is forgiven. This means there can be no exceptions made. No one is excluded from forgiveness when we forgive anyone as now we see everyone through healed perception. In other words our forgiveness of anyone is generalized. This is also transfer of training. It comes through total commitment to this journey within the mind. It takes a lot of disciplined work, but it is a wonderful use of time. Jesus reminds us that to delay the healing is tragic. He is not trying to coerce us but only remind of the happiness and peace that comes through forgiveness. He knows how we suffer when we follow the dictates of the ego. We cannot do this alone; we need the power of the Holy Spirit, Who is always available to us when we call on Him. He is in our right minds. He is the light that is always there to shine away the darkness of our egoic thoughts.

Ask yourself today, "What is coming up for healing in order to feel the love of God within me now? How much desire and willingness do I have to stay vigilant to the workings of my mind?" It means looking at the reactions that we have to whatever seems to be happening in the moment. We can no longer cherish our grievances, our self-concepts, the image we hold about ourselves, our beliefs about what is good or bad, and our judgments about what we like or do not like. Imagine the honesty and courage that goes into this kind of self-revelation. This is why it is so important to be watchful of our thoughts, observing them without judgment and allowing the Holy Spirit to guide us, rather than listening to the voice of the ego. With willingness and desire for healing and honesty in looking at our thoughts, the Love of God that is always within us shines forth. We become a channel of His love and His peace.

Look at the ways you define yourself as a man/woman, father/mother, employee, Course student, good cook, talented singer, or whatever else. Now, look at the rules you have for your relationships and the expectations you have of the people in your life. When these expectations are not met, we have grievances. As Jesus explains, it is because we see ourselves as different from the other, rather than the same "I am me and you are not." "I am end and you are the means to my end." I see my needs as more important than yours. Thus, I am always the important one in any relationship, and you are there to attend to my needs. All the rules of behavior, all the roles, all the expectations, and all my concepts of what I need to be happy create this dance of specialness. That is why we must be willing to look at it all with courage and honesty. Otherwise, we simply operate on automatic pilot, reacting as we always have. Now Jesus urges us to **"Simply do this: Be still and lay aside all thoughts of what you are and what God is; all concepts you have learned about the world; all images you hold about yourself."** (W.189.7.1) He tells us to hold onto nothing we think and believe. He tells us that we have been wrong about

everything. He wants us to remember that the problem and the solution are not about changing anything in the world of form, but only in the mind. He asks us not to determine how any problem is to be solved, as it can never be solved where it is not, which is in the outer forms of this world.

"Do not bring with you one thought the past has taught, nor one belief you ever learned before from anything. Forget this world, forget this course, and come with wholly empty hands unto your God." (W.189.7.4-5) He is not proposing that we put the Course down and do no more Lessons and no more study. We have more to do at this stage. However, it is ultimately about letting everything go, including this Course, as a prerequisite to entering this state of Oneness with God in our meditation time. To know the Course is not enough. Ultimately, it is about the experience that comes when we are willing to apply this teaching. It is about letting go of the past and the future and be fully in the NOW.

Jesus wants us to forget what we have taught ourselves because we have been badly taught. We must let go of everything we have learned and be open to being taught. **"Let us be still an instant, and forget all things we ever learned, all thoughts we had, and every preconception that we hold of what things mean and what their purpose is. Let us remember not our own ideas of what the world is for. We do not know. Let every image held by everyone be loosened from our minds and swept away."** (T.31.I.12.1-3) (ACIM OE T.31.I.12) It requires surrendering our way and releasing the "I know mind," which requires great humility but we can be happy to be humbled because our greatness lies in this. Just notice how much reluctance shows up in this process—how much we want to hold onto our own answers, our point of view, our perspectives, and ultimately our control over our lives.

We block the experience of the holy instant by thinking that we can figure it all out instead of releasing everything we think we know. **"You need not know the way to Him. Your part is simply to allow all obstacles that you have interposed between the Son and God the Father to be quietly removed forever."** (W.189.8.2-3) This is the arrogance of the ego, where we think we know the way, and where we defend our beliefs and strategies instead of just emptying the mind and asking to receive. We do not need to point out the way nor make demands. **"Ask and receive. But do not make demands, nor point the road to God by which He should appear to you."** (W.189.8.5-6) Isn't this what we do when we ask God for the answer to a specific problem that we seem to be facing? We are telling Him that we know what the problem is and that we have determined the answer that we want from Him, but it is not up to us to choose the way.

We need to **"step back and let Him lead the way."** (W.155) We need to **"Rest in God,"** (W.109) and as we turn over all our self-attack and self-hatred which we generally defend against. We turn it all over to the Holy Spirit for healing and miracles. He knows the way. We release our belief that we will find the way on our own. We let go of interfering thoughts, concepts, values, beliefs, and expectations. All we have to do is open the door, call out to Him for help, and then be willing to watch our thoughts and leave the rest to Him. The mistake we make is to put ourselves in charge of our healing instead of letting the Holy Spirit do the healing for us. We cannot heal ourselves. We need Someone from outside of the matrix to do the healing for us. Our part is to bring the blocks to the inner altar and leave them there.

"Father, we do not know the way to You. But we have called, and You have answered us. We will not interfere. Salvation's ways are not our own, for they belong to You. And it is unto You we look for them. Our hands are open to receive Your gifts. We have no thoughts we think apart from You, and cherish no beliefs of

what we are, or Who created us. Yours is the way that we would find and follow. And we ask but that Your Will, which is our own as well, be done in us and in the world, that it become a part of Heaven now." Amen. (W.189.10.1-10)

If we pray with true desire to know the truth about the Self we are, we must start by admitting that we do not know. We have to admit that we are lost, and that we cannot figure out our own way. We release the "I know" mind and simply allow everything to come up for healing. Just because it is all illusion doesn't mean we can simply glide past it. Having the courage to look at the concepts, beliefs, and demands we make of others, and the wounds we are holding onto, is easier when we open up and allow the light of Truth to come forth.

This is such a favorite Lesson of mine because it is ultimately the whole Course summed up in terms of what we are to do every day to have the experience of the holy instant and to truly feel the Love of God.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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